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News Letter

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COOPERATIVE PLANNING FOR A COMMUNITY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The March Nutrition News Letter summarized the findings of a survey of homemakers' information on nutrition which was made by the Division of Special Surveys, BAE, in cooperation with members of the Virginia State, and Richmond Nutrition Committees. Federal nutrition agencies participated also as the study was developing, and on March 11 we had the pleasure of attending a meeting arranged by the Richmond Nutrition Committee to consider the findings of the report and to discuss a plan of follow-up action.

This meeting is regarded as an extremely significant step in cooperative planning for a community nutrition program. First, the meeting grew out of a survey that established the facts about the nutrition knowledge of the community. Second, the survey had been undertaken with the full consultation of members of the State and local committees, so that it reflected the viewpoints of people fully conversant with local problems. Third, the discussion at the meeting was the result of a series of meetings held by the committee while the survey was in progress, and the findings were related to all the previous considerations that had come up in the earlier meetings. In the earlier stages of the survey, members of the committee had accompanied the interviewers to the homes of the women who were interviewed, thus familiarizing themselves with the basic source of the data and how it was derived. The committee, with its understanding of the survey procedures, felt that the appraisal was a true representation of the situation nutrition agencies in the city had to deal with. This understanding was reflected throughout the discussion of the report by the panel and the audience. The discussion turned constantly to the basic findings of the survey: That while 50 percent of the homemakers had some understanding of nutrition and its significance, the other 50 percent had no knowledge of the subject. This posed the problem and indicated the

extent of the field that still had to be covered in nutrition education. The panel, composed of representatives of State and city agencies and groups concerned with nutrition education, accepted these findings as a challenge and proposed various ways through which each agency could intensify its own efforts in its own special field. It was also agreed that detailed plans for a coordinated approach to the problems of nutrition education would be formulated in subsequent meetings of the committee. The first such meeting is reported under "News from State Committees."

USE OF RECORDING AS A MEANS OF STIMULATING INTEREST IN A REPORT

To give the audience at the meeting just described some understanding of how the interviews were conducted in the Richmond survey, a transcription of an interview was played. This transcription was made by recording the dialogue, having one person read the questions and another the answers. The transcription, together with a brief preliminary statement, illustrated more realistically than any description could have done the technique used in interviewing, the give and take that constitutes an interview, and the way in which questions elicit responses. The report itself is then better understood as a compilation of a series of interviews.

Many factors need to be considered in selecting the interview for recording. To start with, the interview should be selected according to the interests of the audience. Since the purpose of the meeting in Richmond was to present the findings of the survey and to show with what effectiveness agencies have been able to get information to homemakers, the kinds of misinformation homemakers have, and the reasons homemakers give for their practices, an interview was chosen which contained full answers to questions and showed some of the kinds of information and misinformation held by homemakers. In using a recording, the audience should be warned that it

does not indicate the range of responses, but merely illustrates the responses in one interview. No one interview can be looked upon as typical, although it may represent the majority of cases.

Post-meeting evaluations indicate that a transcription can provide, within these limitations, a useful adjunct to an oral report of survey findings and stimulate audience interest in a remarkable way.

PLENTIFUL FOODS LISTS AID MENU PLANNING

To promote greater use of foods in plentiful supply, the Food Distribution Programs Branch of PMA in Washington issues two lists—"Foods in Plentiful Supply" and "Suggested Foods for Menu Preparation." The list of Plentiful Foods, issued monthly, represents a long-term program with the following objectives:

(1) To assist in maintaining an orderly flow of commodities through domestic channels of trade by increasing the consumption of certain foodstuffs which might otherwise become in acute abundance.

(2) To afford consumers an opportunity to purchase nutritious foods at relatively lower prices.

(3) To relieve pressure wherever possible on food commodities in relatively short supply by directing consumer attention to alternative foods available in more adequate supply.

The weekly list of Suggested Foods, while serving the same purpose as the monthly plentifuls, was established solely as an aid to the conservation program. The list is not as restrictive, and is intended for use by home economists, public feeding industry and menu planners in general, as well as for use of the Office for Food and Feed Conservation in planning Peace Plates.

If you are not already getting copies of the lists you may secure them from PMA offices located at 641 Washington St., New York 14, N. Y.; 449 W. Peachtree St. N. E., Atlanta 3, Ga.; 623 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.; 566 U. S. Terminal Annex, Dallas 2, Tex.; and 821 Market St., San Francisco 3, Calif.

NEWS FROM STATE COMMITTEES

NEW YORK CITY.—Because of concern over the problems which the directors of day-care centers are meeting with the high cost of food, the New York City Food and Nutrition Committee has reactivated its Committee on Nursery Schools and Day Care Centers. Local district groups are also carrying on programs in this field. For

example, the Washington Heights—Riverside Nutrition Committee, since November 1946, has been issuing a monthly leaflet called "Food for Little Folks." It provides nursery school directors with practical information on food selection, recipes, discussion of the food value of the special foods in season, and plans for menus using these foods. This leaflet was initiated at the request of the Nursery School Committee of the Riverside Civic Council. "Food for Little Folks" is distributed free to all nursery school and day-care centers in the district. It is available in other districts at a charge of 60 cents for 10 issues. Plans are now being made to distribute the leaflet throughout New York City. This committee has also sponsored a program on "Timely Tips on Fighting Food Costs" to which parents and nursery-school directors and teachers were invited. The Kips Bay-Yorkville Nutrition Committee held a course for nursery-school cooks and directors last fall. Four sessions were held on the following topics: "What Kind of Food Are We Serving?" "How Do We Meet These Rising Prices?" "Is Your Kitchen Well Run?" and "Introducing New Foods—Dressing Up Old Ones." There was a stimulating interchange of ideas and suggestions for solving problems. The Harlem Nutrition Committee is planning how nursery school and day centers can help to meet the nutritional needs of the preschool child.

The Lower West Side Nutrition Committee is planning a specific nutrition service to school principals in which a nutritionist would be available at staff meetings for a 30-minute lecture and a demonstration on use of the nutritional material kit. The service will start in one of the schools that cooperated in last year's program on a demonstration basis.

At the annual meeting of the New York City Food and Nutrition Committee on January 21, Dr. Harry S. Mustard, Commissioner of the Department of Health, discussed the place of nutrition in a public health program. Among committee reports was that of the Film Evaluation Committee which stated that the Catalog of Approved Films is now ready for printing. Dr. Norman Jolliffe will continue as chairman for another year.

SOUTH DAKOTA.—Food conservation key-noted the meeting of the South Dakota Nutrition Committee held in Pierre, January 23, according to Past Chairman Mildred Walker. The committee voted to cooperate, through the Food Conservation

Program, with South Dakota World Relief, the agency set up to channel all overseas relief in South Dakota. It also recommended that the food conservation program be stressed in the programs of each agency member of the State Nutrition Committee. One member of the committee was designated to help with publications on South Dakota World Relief and another member was selected to help set up county committees.

During the program, Reverend Schade, who is chairman of the Citizens Food Committee, as well as chairman of the South Dakota World Relief, reported that emphasis has been placed on the conservation program through newspaper accounts and through groups in local communities. He pointed out that if young people learn to conserve food in order to share it with people in foreign countries, they will also learn to work with those people on future problems. The United Nations Appeal for Children was presented by Mr. France of the American Overseas Aid Committee.

New officers were elected, Dr. Charles Schwartz being chosen as State Nutrition Committee chairman.

WEST VIRGINIA.—The State Nutrition Committee is promoting more gardens in West Virginia, especially among mining and industrial families. Its program will stress soil improvement, weed and pest control, winter gardens, and production of vegetables. A State vegetable garden meeting was held to stimulate interest in gardening among such groups as the State Departments of Health and Education, Vocational Agriculture and Home Economics, Extension Service, Farmers Home Administration, and industrial groups. Nutrition members attended the county garden meetings held during February, March, and April. Among the suggestions on how nutrition committees can stimulate interest in gardening were that members (1) attend garden schools; (2) work together for economical production and conservation to make gardening pay, and (3) improve the over-all nutrition program by emphasizing the Basic 7 and urging the growing and greater home use of vegetables that supply the deficiencies in the average diet.

The Garden Committee recommended that the group concentrate on one of the Basic 7 food groups, possibly vitamin C, and that it send out regularly to newspapers suggestions on gardening.

The Food Preservation Committee is planning demonstrations in canneries,

schools, and home service centers to promote greater interest in preservation of food.

The Good Breakfast Campaign, described in the February NNL, is continuing throughout the year. The West Virginia State College started its Good Breakfast Program during the week of February 15 by a Sunday breakfast in the home economics department, which was attended by the president and teachers of the college, the high-school principal and teachers, and community representatives of organizations such as the Homemakers Club, Frontier Club, Fireman's Club, and Woman's Club. The entire community, including the college, the high school, and elementary school, worked each day during the week with programs, activities, and publicity. In Clarksburg, the Business and Professional Women's Club sponsored a poster contest in the junior high school. Tags were presented during the week of March 15 in Kanawha County by home-economics pupils to all persons in local restaurants who ate a five-point breakfast. The Monongahela Power Company in Clarksburg sponsors a Good Breakfast radio program once a month.

Grades 1 to 4 in Preston County are studying the effects of good versus poor lunches by feeding rats poor and adequate diets.

NORTH CAROLINA.—"Bee Busy on Your Garden" is the advice headlining the March news bulletin of the State Nutrition Committee. Clever line drawings carry out the theme.

As you will remember from the February NNL, this committee was designated by the Governor as the organization to carry out the State program of food conservation.

At the annual meeting January 23-24, each of the food conservation committees outlined its plans for cooperating as long as the conservation program continues. The committees are Education, Food Production and Distribution, Public Food Service, Publicity, and Rodent Control.

The regional nutrition committees reported progress in organization and plans for future work. Approximately 125 persons attended the Piedmont Regional meeting of the State Nutrition Committee in Greensboro, February 21.

Dr. W. J. Peterson, of the North Carolina Experiment Station, is the new chairman of the committee.

CHICAGO, ILL.—At the request of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, the Chicago Nutrition Association and the Chicago Home Economics in Business joined with the Federation in arranging a program for lay groups. It was planned as an example of a program suitable for clubs to put on in their local communities. The high light was a skit entitled "A Tale of Two Kitchens," which depicted a day in the lives of two homemakers, one understanding the fundamentals of nutrition and feeding her family accordingly and the other completely in the dark as to what constitutes an adequate diet. Other items on the program were a talk on nutrition and a demonstration of one-dish meals.

The Food Conservation Committee evaluated the packages of food CARE puts up for shipment to Europe and found them very good.

VIRGINIA.—The Richmond Nutrition Council met March 23 to consider what might be the logical steps to follow the meeting of March 11 at which the report of the survey "Homemakers' Acceptance of Nutrition Information in an Urban Community" had been presented. The council took the following steps: (1) Elected officers with Dr. Charles Outland, Medical Director, Richmond Public Schools, as new chairman; (2) reevaluated the present make-up of the council and discussed the lack of representation for newspapers, radio, and some organizations. Although this representation had been provided at the original organization of the council in 1941, circumstances had forced some representatives to move out of town or take positions with other organizations not represented on the committee. New representations from these organizations were invited. (3) A subcommittee was appointed to study the suggestions made by the audience as recorded in the transcript of the panel discussion at the meeting of March 11, to reevaluate the report of the survey, and to make recommendations to the council at its next meeting. (4) The council considered with a representative of the Nutrition Programs Office the effectiveness of the meeting of March 11 in case another study of this kind were made in another area.

NEW MATERIALS

Food Conservation

"Money-Saving Main Dishes," issued by the Office for Food and Feed Conserva-

tion, in cooperation with BHNHE, gives about 150 recipes and menu suggestions together with buying guides, information about nutrition and alternates that may be used when a particular food is not available. It can be procured by sending a post card to Food Conservation, Washington 25, D. C.

The Office for Food and Feed Conservation in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which is now heading up the food conservation program, is continuing to issue the daily Peace Plates and the supplemental radio scripts. In addition, it is issuing a weekly News Letter which carries items relating to food conservation. This office has also prompted the publication of several fact sheets on insect and rodent control, one of which entitled "Pantry Pests" was sent you in February. Members of nutrition committees or officers in other organizations may have their names put on the mailing list to receive any of these materials regularly if they will write Consumer Section, Office for Food and Feed Conservation, Washington 25, D. C.

Other Materials

"A Consumers' Guide to U. S. Standards for Farm Products," Misc. Pub. 553, has recently been revised by Catherine M. Viehmann. Copies are available from the Office of Information, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

Not new but worth calling to your attention in case you are not reading it, is "The National Food Situation," published quarterly. You may have your name placed on the mailing list by writing Economic Information, BAE, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

Sincerely yours,



M. L. Wilson, Chief
Nutrition Programs



W. H. Sebrell, Consultant